

Theme: Jesus, the Servant of the Lord, suffered and died in payment for our sins, but through that very suffering and the resurrection He was victorious to bring us salvation.

I. The Son of Man Must Suffer, Die, and Be Raised?

A. Jesus shocking words in Mark 8:31

He then began to teach them that the Son of Man must suffer many things and be rejected by the elders, chief priests and teachers of the law, and that he must be killed and after three days rise again. Mark 8:31

B. This is shocking - but it MUST happen because the Scripture foretold it!

C. Isaiah 52:13-53:12 - a meditation on the Suffering Servant (After Hours - Servant Songs & Mark)

II. The Suffering Servant of the Lord

A. The surprise - the suffering for the Servant of the Lord

See, my servant will act wisely; he will be raised and lifted up and highly exalted. ¹⁴ Just as there were many who were appalled at him — his appearance was so disfigured beyond that of any man and his form marred beyond human likeness — ¹⁵ so will he sprinkle many nations, and kings will shut their mouths because of him. For what they were not told, they will see, and what they have not heard, they will understand. Isaiah 52:13–15

1. vv13, 15 show the expected exaltation

- v13 - raised, lifted up, highly exalted!
- v15 - sprinkle (High Priest); Kings silent

2. Verse 14 shows the surprise - the Servant suffers!

- Many are appalled at Him (literally 'you' - to Servant)
- The Servant will be disfigured, marred
- Many are appalled at solitary Servant - a key theme

B. The Servant's Beauty Hidden - The Paradox of the Incarnation

Who has believed our message and to whom has the arm of the Lord been revealed? ² He grew up before him like a tender shoot, and like a root out of dry ground. He had no beauty or majesty to attract us to him, nothing in his appearance that we should desire him. ³ He was despised and rejected by men, a man of sorrows, and familiar with suffering. Like one from whom men hide their faces he was despised, and we esteemed him not. Isaiah 53:1–3

- He is the strong Arm of the LORD (v1) but a tender shoot (v2)
- He is Beauty Incarnate but don't we do not see His beauty for it is veiled (v2)
- He is Majesty Incarnate but it is veiled & we miss it
- His whole life is full of the suffering of being despised, rejected, and misunderstood! (v3)
- The Desire of the Nations came - and we esteemed Him not! This is the beginning of suffering.

C. The Suffering of the Servant intensifies

Surely he took up our infirmities and carried our sorrows, yet we considered him stricken by God, smitten by him, and afflicted. ⁵ But he was pierced for our transgressions, he was crushed for our iniquities; the punishment that brought us peace was upon him, and by his wounds we are healed. Isaiah 53:4–5

- We move lower still - His suffering intensifies (9x)
- v4 - infirmities, sorrows, stricken, smitten, afflicted
- v5 - pierced, crushed, punished, wounded
- The Servant must suffer many things! (Mark 8:31)
- How can this be? The Servant of the Lord suffers?

D. The Suffering of the Servant in death

We all, like sheep, have gone astray, each of us has turned to his own way; and the Lord has laid on him the iniquity of us all. ⁷ He was oppressed and afflicted, yet he did not open his mouth; he was led like a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is silent, so he did not open his mouth. ⁸ By oppression and judgment he was taken away. And who can speak of his descendants? For he was cut off from the land of the living; for the transgression of my people he was stricken. ⁹ He was assigned a grave with the wicked, and with the rich in his death, though he had done no violence, nor was any deceit in his mouth. Isa. 53:6–9

1. We now move lower still - His suffering death as a sacrificial Lamb
2. v6 - we are straying sheep; He becomes the sacrificial Lamb!
3. v7 - oppression and affliction but the Sacrificial Lamb is silent all the way to His slaughter
4. v8 - the Lamb is not rescued! He is taken away, cut off from the land of the living
5. v9 - He dies with the wicked and descends into the grave - even though He was utterly innocent
6. How can this be? The Servant of the Lord suffers?

E. The Suffering of the Servant by the will of God!

Yet **it was the LORD's will to crush him and cause him to suffer**, and though **the Lord makes his life a guilt offering**, he will see his offspring and prolong his days, and the will of the Lord will prosper in his hand. Is 53:10

1. We now move lower still - the mystery of the atonement
2. It was the Lord's will to crush the Servant!

3. The Lord makes the Servant a guilt offering!

4. The will of the Lord prospers in the death of the Servant as a guilt offering!

5. This is the moment of utter abandonment for the Servant, far greater than all the suffering in His earthly life

- a. It was one thing to be afflicted and crushed by people - but by His Father God?
- b. It was one thing to be abandoned by people, even His disciples - but abandoned and forsaken by His Father?

From the sixth hour until the ninth hour darkness came over all the land. ⁴⁶ About the ninth hour Jesus cried out in a loud voice, "Eloi, Eloi, lama sabachthani?" — which means, "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?" Matthew 27:45–46

1. The sun refuses to shine at the death of its Maker
2. Jesus feels the utter weight of suffering and is abandoned by the Father

c. This is true Suffering beyond compare

6. This is the most shocking moment in all of human history as all of the suffering of Jesus' earthly life is crystallized on the Cross and He is abandoned by the Father and crushed to death.

F. The Suffering of the Servant was to atone for our sins!

Surely he took up **our infirmities** and carried **our sorrows**, yet we considered him stricken by God, smitten by him, and afflicted. ⁵ But he was pierced for **our transgressions**, he was crushed for **our iniquities**; the punishment that brought us peace was upon him, and by his wounds we are healed. ⁶ **We all, like sheep, have gone astray, each of us has turned to his own way**; and the Lord has laid on him the iniquity of us all. Isaiah 53:4–6

1. This was because of our sin - 4x this is said!

2. Through repetition, Isaiah drives the point home!
3. Through variations of terms for sin, Isaiah drives the point home!
4. The sin is both universal (our iniquities; we all like sheep) and individual (each of us has gone his own way). None can escape our culpability in this!
5. CJ story - Hurricane Andrew - Timmy - I didn't do it
6. We are like Timmy - but we did do it!
7. Our sin has brought upon us all of the sorrow and misery of this life, it has unleashed the hurricane of consequences we see all around us.
8. Our sin has violated the holiness of God; we have committed treachery and treason against our Creator-King.
9. For all of this we deserved to be stricken, smitten, pierced, and crushed by the righteous wrath of God - but the Servant took it in our place.
10. Behold the love of the Father - He sacrificed His own spotless perfect Son to forgive us!
11. Behold the love of the Son - in our place condemned He stood, willingly embracing our punishment and giving His blessing to us.
12. Behold the love of the Spirit - He lovingly opened our eyes when we were dead in our trespasses and sins, revealing the arm of the Lord to us unworthy sinners!

III. The Servant's Victory!

- A. Death is not the final word - the Servant justifies us!

Yet it was the LORD's will to crush him and cause him to suffer, and though the Lord makes his life a guilt offering, **he will see his offspring** and prolong his days, and the will of the Lord will prosper in his hand. ¹¹ After the suffering of his soul, he will see the light [of life] and be satisfied; by his knowledge **my righteous servant will justify many, and he will bear their iniquities.**

¹²Therefore I will give him a portion among the great, and he will divide the spoils with the strong, because he poured out his life unto death, and was numbered with the transgressors. For **he bore the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors.** Isa. 53:10–12

 1. The Servant did not suffer in vain!
 2. v10 - The Servant lives and sees His offspring - us!
 3. v11 - The Servant justifies many and bears their iniquities - us!
 4. v12 - The Servant bore the sin of many and makes intercession for the transgressors - us!
- B. The Servant raised and glorified

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1. The Servant's days do not end in His death - His days are prolonged by the resurrection! (v10)
2. After the suffering of His soul, the Servant sees the light of life - the resurrection! (v11)
3. The Servant died naked and poor - but through resurrection and ascension, He now has the spoils and shares them with others! (v12)

IV. Applying the Word

A. Do I see the necessity of the Suffering Servant?

1. According to Scripture the Servant MUST suffer and die for us to be saved
2. God says sin is so destructive and heinous, that nothing other than the suffering and atoning death of His Servant and Son could atone for it.
3. God has revealed in Scripture that there was NO other way for us to be saved.
4. Many want to say there had to be some other way - but according to Jesus that is literally Satanic (Mark 8:31-33).
5. All other ideas minimize the destructiveness of sin and the holiness of God, but God's Word shows us the cost of salvation.
6. We must never allow the thoughts and emotions of fallen humanity to eclipse the truth of God revealed in the Scripture.
7. The Servant Had to suffer and die - or we could never be saved.

B. Do I see the beauty of the Suffering Servant?

1. Isaiah warns that we missed His beauty - but we must see it now.
2. The cross reveals the beauty of God's holiness - sin must and will be punished.
3. The cross reveals the beauty of God's integrity - He does not change or shrink back, even at the cost of bearing the penalty of our sin.
4. The cross reveals the beauty of God's love - He is willing to suffer to win you and me as His Bride!
5. O the beauty of the Cross! O the beauty of salvation! O the beauty of our Savior!
6. Meditate regularly upon the beauty of this, so that your heart is captivated and brought to worship!

C. The Table of Our Beautiful Salvation

1. Come to the Table grieving over our sin
2. Come to the Table rejoicing over our salvation
3. Come to the Table giving thanks for the beautiful salvation we have been given!

The Suffering Servant

Isaiah 52:13-15; Isaiah 53

October 29, 2023

Communion

Revelation 1:4-6

Teaching keywords: Atonement; Christology; justification

Grace and peace to you from him who is, and who was, and who is to come, and from the Seven-fold Spirit before his throne, ⁵ and from Jesus Christ, who is the faithful witness, the firstborn from the dead, and the ruler of the kings of the earth. To him who loves us and has freed us from our sins by his blood, ⁶ and has made us to be a kingdom and priests to serve his God and Father — to him be glory and power for ever and ever! Amen. Revelation 1:4-6

See, my servant will act wisely; he will be raised and lifted up and highly exalted. ¹⁴ Just as there were many who were appalled at him — his appearance was so disfigured beyond that of any man and his form marred beyond human likeness — ¹⁵ so will he sprinkle many nations, and kings will shut their mouths because of him. For what they were not told, they will see, and what they have not heard, they will understand.

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